The Member then examined how the administration of justice was carried on in respect of excise cases. He said that it was disastrous that, while even in regard to police charges the percentage of conviction was only 32, the percentage was 95 in respect of excise cases charged before the magistracy. In Alleppey and Devikulam, all the cases charged ended in conviction. In the opinion of the Member, justice was blindly and arbitrarily administered in so far as excise cases were concerned and it was high time that the Government started an enquiry into that important matter.

In conclusion, the Member requested that, so far as the Excise administration was concerned, it was desirable to take action on the following lines :—

(1) Toddy arrack should be sold in preference to jaggery arrack.

(2) The price of liquor should be enhanced so as to discourage drinking.

(3) Distilleries should be established in all taluks where the manufacture of arrack was carried on and the contract for the supply of toddy arrack given to the people of the State.

(4) Greater facilities should be afforded for the manufacture of jaggery,

(5) The import of foreign liquor should be discouraged by raising the duty thereon.

(6) Stringent instructions should be issued to the Magistracy to ensure the same even-handed justice being meted out to the public in excise cases as in other cases.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's representations will be referred to the Excise Commissioner for report.

15. The inconvenience caused to the inhabitants of the southern group of pakuthies of the Quilon taluk owing to the absence of a fish-curing yard.

Mr. C. Raman Tampi, B. A., B. L. (Member, Quilon taluk) said that, during three months of the year, namely, from Edavom to Karkadagom, much inconvenience was caused to the inhabitants on the Quilon sea-coast from the foul smell emanating from fish indiscriminately dried by the fishermen. Right along the sea-coast from Quilon to Paravur, the process was conducted on a very large scale. In spite of their best efforts, the Quilon T. I. C. were not able to do much towards minimising the nuisance and danger to public health. He therefore prayed for the establishment of a regular fish-curing yard at Tangacherry, Quilon or any other suitable place in the taluk. The Member said that he was aware that a yard was lately opened at Muttam and that it was reported to be not very popular. In his view, that was due to the unsuitability of the locality selected for the experiment, and he felt sure that a yard, if opened in the Quilon taluk, was bound to be a success. He therefore requested that the matter might receive the early consideration of the Government.

Dewan's reply.—The operations of the fish-curing yard at Muttam will be watched before other yards are opened.

16. The necessity for certain amendments in the Tobacco Rules.

Mr. Kora Kochu Korula (Member, Trading Classes, Kottayam) observed that, under the Tobacco Rules dated the 5th July 1913, the wholesale vend of tobacco was prohibited in certain taluks of the State except under a license, a licensed retail vendor should not have in stock more than 10 lbs. of tobacco at a time, and certain officers of the Excise Department were competent to issue free licenses for the retail vend of tobacco. The Member suggested that the prohibition in regard to the wholesale vend of tobacco without license should be extended to all parts of the State. The restriction that a licensed retail vendor should not have in stock more than 10 lbs. of tobacco at a time would, in his opinion, give rise to foul play and corruption both on the part of the vendors as well as the subordinate officers of the department. He

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therefore suggested that, so far as retail vendors were concerned, they might be permitted to keep in stock that quantity of tobacco which they were bound to sell under the license every month, that the licenses should be issuable only by the Circle Officers and that such licenses should be freely given to all except those who had been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude. He also stated that the fee of Rs. 5, charged on each license for wholesale vend, sat heavily on the licensees and that the same should be done away with.

The next amendment suggested by the Member was in clause 8 of Rule 60, which laid down that a licensed wholesale vendor might purchase the tobacco required for sale in his shop from another licensed wholesale vendor, provided that the shops of both were situated within the same taluk. The Member observed that there was no rule fixing the places where licenses for wholesale vend should be taken. That being so, there might be no wholesale licensees at all in some taluks. Further, there was no restriction as to the price of tobacco to be fixed by the wholesale licensees. To make tobacco freely available to the public and in the best interests of trade, the restriction as to taluk should be removed.

As regards the levy of duty on excess of deficiency exceeding 15% as compared to the quantity mentioned in the permit, the Member said that the duty should be payable only on the quantity actually found on weighment at the customs house and that Rules 21 and 28 should be amended accordingly.

In the interests of trade, the restriction that the importer himself should be present at the chowkey of import should be relaxed by permitting the agent of the importer to transact business at the chowkeys.

According to clause 13 of Rule 33, Jaffna tobacco should pay a godown rent of half an anna per bale for a month or any fraction thereof, and Coimbatore and Tinnevelly tobacco should pay one and a half anna. The Member stated that, as regards the latter rate, a uniform fee of As. 2 per bale might be levied as godown charges.

The Member assured the Government that the adoption of the amendments proposed by him would not affect the Government revenue from the sale of tobacco, and he therefore prayed for the rules being duly modified.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's remarks will be referred to the Excise Commissioner for report.

III.—PROTECTION.

(1) Legislation.

17. The necessity for reforming the constitution of the Legislative Council and allowing the non-official Members the right of interpellation and of discussing the State Budget.

Mr. C. Raman Tampi, B. A., B. L. (Member, Quilon taluk) said that the subject of his representation was one that had been pressed on the attention of the Government in the second, fourth and the sixth to the tenth sessions of the Assembly, and the supreme importance of the question was his excuse in bringing it up again for consideration. In his view, it was high time that the Government took up the question of reforming the Legislative Council. A reference to the Unrepealed Regulations of the State would show that, in the case of all statutes which provided for contributions to the State such as the Abkari, Tobacco, Civil Courts, Stamp, Court-fees, Alleppey Port dues and Forest Regulations, frequent amendments had been made, and it was a distinct feature of the amendments that each succeeding Regulation made greater demands from the public tax-payer than its predecessor. In thus increasing the taxes and burdens, the people had absolutely no voice. Though in democratic countries the principle was always recognised that there should be no taxation without representation, still in Travancore the desire on the part of the people to be at least consulted in such matters was certainly legitimate. The Legislative Council Regulation was

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